

## Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 DAMASC 04021 281025Z  
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 ONY-00 /011 W  
-----108865 281031Z /12-R  
R 280925Z JUN 77  
FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3677

C O N F I D E N T I A L DAMASCUS 4021

STADIS//////////

FOR NEA/ARN DRAPER

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PINT, PGOV, SY, US  
SUBJECT: SYRIAN JEWRY: VISITORS

REF: STATE 145086

1. I CAN UNDERSTAND WHY KABBANI IS FEELING SOMEWHAT UNDER THE GUN. THE LAST AMERICAN PROFESSORS FOR PEACE IN THE MIDDLE EAST GROUP, AS I WROTE YOU ON JUNE 13, LEFT HERE UNHAPPY AND IT NOW APPEARS THE UNHAPPINESS WAS MUTUAL. I ASSUME THAT AMONG THE REASONS FOR SYRIA'S ATTITUDE WAS THE WAY THE GROUP'S MEMBERS INVADED THE JEWISH QUARTER DURING THEIR VISIT.

2. SEVERAL MEMBERS OF OUR LATEST GROUP OF VISITORS, THE NATIONAL COMMITTEE ON AMERICAN FOREIGN POLICY, WERE FOLLOWED AND EVENTUALLY STOPPED BY SYRIAN G-2 IN THE JEWISH QUARTER JUNE 27. THEY WERE POLITELY INTERROGATED AND QUICKLY RELEASED BUT THE EXPERIENCE COLORED THEIR TRIP AND MAY BE TALKED ABOUT. EARLIER IN THE DAY I HAD TOLD THEM I THOUGHT IT WOULD BE ALL RIGHT FOR THEM TO VISIT THE AREA IF THEY BEHAVED AS TOURISTS AND WERE CAREFUL ABOUT TAKING PICTURES, PRODUCING NOTEBOOKS, RECORDING CONVERSATIONS, ETC.  
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3. REASONS FOR THESE PROBLEMS ARE NOT YET CLEAR TO US. IT COULD BE THAT A LARGER NUMBER OF VISITORS IN RECENT WEEKS HAS JUST OVERLOADED THE CIRCUITS. OR IT COULD BE PART OF A GENERAL TIGHTENING IN SYRIAN SECURITY SURVEILLANCE IN THE CITY SINCE THE AL-FADIL ASSASSINATION, NOW REINFORCED BY THE RAZZUQ KILLING. THIRDLY, GROWING SKEPTICISM OVER

PEACE PROSPECTS MAY PLAY A PART. WHATEVER THE REASONS, WE  
WILL NOW HAVE TO BE MORE CAUTIOUS IN OUR GUIDANCE TO VISITORS.

4. GIVEN THIS BACKGROUND, I THINK IT WOULD BE RISKY TO  
ASSUME THAT SHALOM, PETERS AND SLATER COULD BE CERTAIN OF  
OBTAINING VISAS AT DAMASCUS AIRPORT WITHOUT PRIOR NOTIFICA-  
TION. AM THEREFORE PLANNING TO NOTIFY SHOUFI LATER  
THIS WEEK OF THEIR VISIT AND ASK THAT MFA NOTIFY AIRPORT  
AUTHORITIES. WOULD ALSO PLAN TO HAVE SOMEONE MEET  
SHALOM JULY 7.  
PELLETREAU

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NNN

## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** Z  
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**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
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**Decaption Date:** 22 May 2009  
**Decaption Note:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 22 May 2009  
**Disposition Event:**  
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**TAGS:** PINT, PGOV, SY, US  
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**Review Markings:**  
Margaret P. Grafeld  
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